

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1-3. These sheets, which include Figures 1-3, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1-3. Figs. 1-3 have been labeled as "BACKGROUND ART".

Attachments: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 5 and 8 are independent claims. Claims 1-4, 14 and 15 have been amended. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the objections in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

Allowable Subject Matter

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner considers the subject matter of claims 1-19 to be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the objections set forth in the Office Action and that the prosecution on the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

While claims 1-4, 14 and 15 have been amended, Applicant does not concede the Office Action's statutory objections are proper. The amendments are understood to not narrow the scope of the claimed embodiments nor have they been made for reasons related to patentability. Rather, the amendments are made to clarify the claimed embodiments. Thus, in future construction

or interpretation, the amended claims should be entitled to a full range of equivalence.

**Claim for Priority**

The Examiner has not recognized the Applicant's claim for foreign priority. In view of the fact that the Applicant's claim for foreign priority has been perfected, the Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge Applicant's claim for foreign priority in the next Office Action.

**Drawings**

The Examiner has objected to drawings and required that Figures 1-3 should be designed by a legend such as "Prior Art" because only that which is old is illustrated.

Attached hereto are replacement sheets containing Figures 1-3, which contain a legend to designate the drawings as "BACKGROUND ART".

**Acknowledgment of Information Disclosure Statement**

The Examiner has acknowledged the Information Disclosure Statement filed on July 17, 2003. An initialed copy of the

PTO-1449 has been received from the Examiner. No further action is necessary at this time.

**Specification**

The Examiner objected to the Abstract because of a minor informality, that is, the Abstract is not in the range of 50 to 150 words, as required by MPEP § 608.01(b). As will be seen by the above amendments, the Abstract has been amended to comply with the requirements of the Examiner. Accordingly, the objection of the Examiner has been obviated.

Additionally, a minor typographical error on page 16 of the specification has been corrected by the above amendments.

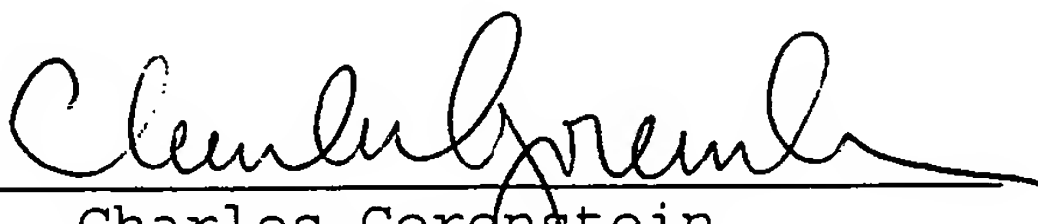
**Conclusion**

Should any issues arise which can be resolved by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to telephone Daniel K. Dorsey (Reg. No. 32,520) at (703) 205-8000 in an effort to expedite prosecution.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees


required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of  
time fees.

Respectfully submitted,  
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By   
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 Attachments: Abstract of the Disclosure  
Replacement Sheets of Drawings